CONSUMER TIME

POTATOES ON PARADE

NETWORK: NBC DATE: June 29, 1946

ORIGIN: WRC TIME: 12:15-12:30 PM EDT

(Produced by the U. S. Department of Agriculture...this script is for reference only...and may not be broadcast without special permission. The title CONSUMER TIME is restricted to network broadcast of the program...presented for more than thirteen years in the interest of consumers.)

-oOo-

1. SOUND: CASH REGISTER RINGS TWICE...MONEY IN TILL

2. JOHN: It's CONSUMER TIME!

3. SOUND: CASH REGISTER....CLOSE DRAWER

4. ANNCR: During the next fifteen minutes the National Broadcasting Company and its affiliated independent stations make their facilities available for the presentation of CONSUMER TIME, by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. And here are Mrs. Freyman and Johnny.

5. JOHN: (SINGS) Potatoes are cheaper...potatoes are cheaper...now's the time to eat more spuds.

6. FREYMAN: Right you are, Johnny. We have a record crop of early potatoes this year...about seventy-five million bushels...to say nothing of the late potatoes that will be on the market later. Are you practicing what you preach and eating lots of potatoes these days?

7. JOHN: We always eat plenty of potatoes where I live, Mrs. Freyman. I can't imagine anybody who doesn't like potatoes.

8. FREYMAN: Well, I can't either, Johnny. But did you know that potatoes weren't always as popular as they are now?

9. JOHN: Well, I remember reading that South America is the original home of potatoes...and the early Spanish explorers found potatoes were popular with the Indians.

10. FREYMAN: That's true, Johnny. And the Spaniards were the ones who introduced potatoes to Europe. But it took the European people about two hundred years to appreciate the value of the potato.

11. JOHN: Why do you suppose that was, Mrs. Freyman?

12. FREYMAN: Well, for one thing they were new...and people always seem to be a little cautious about new things. Besides the potatoes of those days were probably smaller and not so smooth as the potatoes we have today...thanks to science.

And oh, the way they cooked potatoes in Europe in the early days, Johnny.

13. JOHN: No good, huh?

14. FREYMAN: Well, do you think you would have been such a potato lover if you were served potatoes baked with beef marrow and various spices...or how about preserved potatoes?

15. JOHN: No thank you. I'll just have another helping of salad, please.

16. FREYMAN: And of course, some people thought potatoes were poisonous. But on the other hand, others thought they were good as a love potion for patching up unhappy love affairs.

17, JOHN: Is that when the...uh, potato stock started to rise?

18. FREYMAN: Well, no one seems quite sure, Johnny. But gradually the European countries began to realize what a nourishing...and cheap food the potato was. There are many interesting stories of how success came to the potato. In France for instance, it all started in the eighteenth century kitchen of (FADE).... M'sieur Parmentier....

19. BUTLER: M'sieur le chef, I am to inform you that M'sieur Parmentier wishes dinner served to him and his guests at exactly eight. The pheasants, they are ready?

20. CHEF: You may see for yourself, M'sieur.

21. BUTLER: (CRITICAL) Hmm. They'll do. And the soup?

22. CHEF: A taste, M'sieur.

23. BUTLER: (SMACKS LIPS) A trifle more salt. And this dish here, what is it?

24. CHEF: You will honor me by trying it, M'sieur. Just a taste, so as not to disturb my artistic arrangement... Now then?

25. BUTLER: Delicieux! Delightful! Another taste. And you must tell me what it is, mon ami.

26. CHEF: (SOTTO VOCE) And how shall you act when I tell you, I wonder. (NORMAL VOICE) Bien, it is potatoes!

27. BUTLER: Mais non... Have I treated you so badly that you should poison me?

28. CHEF: Come, come, M'sieur. You know perfectly well that I myself have been eating these...poisonous potatoes...as you call them for many months. Perhaps I am dead. Do you believe so, M'sieur?

29. BUTLER: But M'sieur le chef, they say....

30. CHEF: They say...they say...but they do not eat the potatoes. Tonight you shall serve them at M'sieur Parmentier's dinner table, and we shall see...(FADE) We shall see....

31. PAUSE:

32. JOHN: Well, I bet there was one less chef in France after M'sieur Parmentier and his guests found out what they were eating, Mrs. Freyman.

33. FREYMAN: Wrong, Johnny. The potatoes made such a hit that everyone insisted on knowing what the dish was. When the chef told them they had been eating potatoes, and that he had been eating them for months, he converted them. In fact, M'sieur Parmentier was so impressed that he decided to start campaigning for potatoes.

34. JOHN: Kind of a publicity agent.

35. FREYMAN: He really was. And one of the first tricks he pulled had all of Paris' high society...talking about potatoes...(FADE)...and M'sieur Parmentier.

36. SUSETTE: Bon jour, darling, are you feeling better today. I've come to cheer you.

37. DORINE: Sweet Susette. I am languishing...sinking...dying...

38. SUSETTE: Dorine!

39. DORINE: Of boredom, my cherie. Come, sit down. Tell me all that happened at court last night...but all.

40. SUSETTE: Ah, Dorine...such excitement. (VERY CATTY) A pity you had to miss it. It was a sensation. Everybody stared...and then the gossip. But my poor sweet cherie, I should not make you feel badly that you were ill and missed all the fun

41. FORINE: (IRONIC) Divine Susette, your're so thoughtful. But what could cause such a sensation at the courtof Louis the Sixteenth and Marie Antoinette?

42. SUSETTE: Potato flowers, little one.

43. DORINE: You jest! Potato flowers...why...how?

44. SUSETTE: The King wore them as ornaments in his buttonhole. And the Queen....

45. DORINE: The Queen...do go on.

46. SUSETTE: Marie Antoinette wore potato flowers in her hair all evening. From the potatoes that M'sieur Parmentier planted. And they say t'is a lie that potatoes are poisonous. Too bad you had to miss the excitement. But adieu, adieu cherie, I must be off...

47. DORINE: Stay, stay, Dorine, you just arrived...

48. SUSETTE: I would adore it, my petite, but I must be off to M'sieur Parmentier's. What sould everyone think if my hair was dressed without potato flowers tonight...and I must get some of the potatoes (FADE) for my chef too.

49. FREYMAN: And that's how M'sieur Parmentier went about popularizing potatoes in France, Johnny.

50. JOHN: Well, I think he did France a great favor, Mrs. Freyman.

51. FREYMAN: So do I. And so did the French people after awhile. In fact the story goes that the King of France once thanked him...for finding "bread for the poor". And they say that every year people plant potatoes on M'sieur Parmentier's grave...so his service might never be forgotten by Frenchmen.

52. JOHN: That certainly is a nice tribute. But who introduced potatoes to the United States, Mrs. Freyman?

53. FREYMAN: Well, it's pretty well agreed that some Irish immigrants brought the potatoes over to New Hampshire. That's probably how they became known as "Irish" potatoes.

54. JOHN: I wonder if potatoes were popular right away in America...or whether they needed a publicity agent over here, too.

55. FREYMAN: Potatoes gradually became popular. It's funny how important people helped the potato become successful. For instance in Pennsylvania, they tell the story about a man who visited the Governor in the spring of 1825...with a half bushel of potatoes ...in his saddle bags.

56. MAN: Good day, Your Excellency.

57. GOVERNOR: Ah, my friend, good day...good day. Sitdown sit down... (WHISPERS) You've brought them? Where are the potatoes?

58. MAN: At my inn.

59. GOVERNOR: And how many?

60. MAN: An even half-bushel...the very finest. I myself selected them.

61. GOVERNOR: Ah ha...it is well. Lean over my friend I would whisper to you...(UNINTELLIGIBLE MUTTERING)

62. SOUND: PAUSE...THEN HORSE IN THE DISTANCE...BECOMES LOUDER.

63. MAN: Whoa...whoa !

64. SOUND: OUT

65. SECOND MAN: Hello, my friend, back from Harrisburg. Did you see the Governor?

66. MAN: I did.

67. SECOND MAN: And whom, my friend, do you think His Excellency will appoint Recorder of Deeds for our County?

68. MAN: (OFF HAND...UNINTERESTED) Myself.

69. SECOND MAN: And who Register of Wills?

70. MAN: Myself, I apprehend.

71. SECOND MAN: And whom Prothonatory? Clerk of the Courts?

72. MAN: I have in my saddle-bag commissions to each of these official posts, and when I have adjusted my affairs to this end, I shall enter upon my official duties.

73. SECOND MAN: Hmmm. A half-bushel of potatoes well marketed.

74. SOUND: PAUSE.

75. JOHN: Well, Mrs. Freyman, that certainly was a good bargain.

76. FREYMAN: Yes, Johnny, and I think you can use the world "bargain" to describe potatoes today.

77. JOHN: You mean because there are so many of the new potatoes coming to market these days?

78. FREYMAN: That's right. They're a bargain from the standpoint of nutrition, price and quality.

79. JOHN: The quality of these potatoes is pretty good then?

80. FREYMAN: Very good, Johnny. The new potatoes we eat today are the result of scientific breeding and selection for over one hundred years.

81. JOHN: Well, what's the reason for so many new potatoes now, Mrs. Freyman? You said something before about seventy five million bushels.

82. FREYMAN: There are really two reasons. First the growers planted more potatoes than the production goals set last winter.

83. JOHN: Mmmmhmmm. And the second?

84. FREYMAN: Bountiful nature, Johnny. There have been exceptionally high yields of potatoes this year.

85. JOHN: (MUSING) Good old Mother Nature....hmmm....plenty of potatoes hmmm...meanwhile....

86. FREYMAN: Johnny...I can practically see the wheels going round in your head. What are you thinking?

87. JOHN: I've got an idea...a wonderful idea. Why don't we ship potatoes to the famine stricken areas all over the world?

88. FREYMAN: That's a very generous idea, Johnny, but it isn't a very practical one.

89. JOHN: (DISAPPOINTED) Oh...well, why not?

90. FREYMAN: Potatoes are very bulky...and anyway most of them would probably spoil before the trip abroad was over. But there's a very definite way they can help out in the world food shortage.

91. JOHN: Well good...how's that?

92. FREYMAN: Elementary, my dear Johnny. We all eat more potatoes...so we can send abroad more of the foods that can be shipped safely.

93. JOHN: Like wheat?

94. FREYMAN: Exactly. Haven't you heard the slogan "Reach for a potato instead of more bread."

95. JOHN: They tell me they used that back in World War I.

96. FREYMAN: Oh, well, of course I wouldn't remember as far back as that.

97. JOHN: Naturally not...and now, don't get me wrong, I love potatoes... but aren't they supposed to be nearly eighty percent water?

98. FREYMAN: Mmmm hmmm...but oh, that other twnety percent. Listen to this line up, Johnny. Potatoes have good quality protein...starch, iron and other important minerals...as well as some of the B Vitamins and Vitamin C.

99. JOHN: Well, I told you I loved potatoes...probably love them a little more than is good for the old waistline. But I eat 'em anyhow...and let the potato chips fall where they may.

100. FREYMAN: (INDIGNANT) Now just one minute.

101. JOHN: Why, Mrs. Freyman...what's the matter. I didn't think that joke was bad...well, at least not <u>that</u> bad.

102. FREYMAN: It's not your so-called "joke", Johnny...I'm used to those. But you were slurring the reputation of the potato.

103. JOHN: I? I? Would I do such a thing to the vegetable I love?

104. FREYMAN: Don't be so melodramatic, Johnny. It's just that you hinted that potatoes are fattening...which is a common mistake of many people .

105. JOHN: So what if they are fattening? I like potatoes anyway... Hey... Did you say potatoes aren't fattening? No Kidding? Honest? Oh, boy....

106. FREYMAN: The nutritionists say that a medium sized potato provides about one hundred calories toward the day's energy needs.

107. JOHN: One hundred calories.....(DOUBTFULLY) Well, isn't that a lot?

108. FREYMAN: No indeed...it's about the same number of calories you get in a serving of green peas...or sweet corn. A good sized apple or a banana means one hundred calories too.

109. JOHN: How about bread...if we're supposed to reach for a potato instead of more bread.

110. FREYMAN: More good news...a medium-sized potato has about the same number of calories as a thick slice of bread...or two thin slices. That's about one hundred calories. But....

111. JOHN: I knew there'd be a "but" sooner or later...it was all too good to be true.

112. FREYMAN: It's the company that potatoes keep that make the calorie totals soar. You know, Johnny, gravy....

113. JOHN: (GROAN) Ooh...ya got me!

114. FREYMAN: And butter...or margarine...those are the things that help you put on weight...not the potatoes. Incidentally, Johnny are you supposed to be reducing or something?

115. JOHN: Me? Oh no...I'm just not anxious to lose my sylph-like figure, you know.

116. FREYMAN: In other words, you talk a good diet...but go right on eating as much of everything as you want.

117. JOHN: Oh no...not any more...I'm going to eat more potatoes instead of bread. But, how do you suppose M'sieur Parmentier, the man who popularized potatoes in France, would promote potatoes to the American homemaker if he were alive today?

118. FREYMAN: Well let's see...I think he would probably stage a parade.... Potatoes on parade! With a little circus music in the background, please.

119. MUSIC: CALLIOPE EFFECT UP AND THEN UNDER....

120. FREYMAN: In the first float in the potato parade, we see a big sign...

121. JOHN: "At breakfast, potatoes can pinchhit for wheat cereal...toast..., or biscuits..."

122. FREYMAN: And under the sign there are hugh platters of potato patties... made from leftover mashed potatoes, of course.

123. JOHN: Mmmm hmmmm, they ought to make a hit with the spectators.

124. FREYMANP And with the little women who has to get breakfast in a hurry too. But here comes the second float in the magnificent spud spectacle.

125. JOHN: Oh my, oh my! Look at the huge frying pan full of the most gorgeous hashed browned potatoes...and oh boy...a gigantic casserole of creamed potatoes.

126.FREYMAN: The next float we have a real live girl smiling over a tremendous frying pan of sliced potatoes fried country style. They're browned so nicely we can easily tell they were fried in meat drippings. Isn't the girl pretty, Johnny?

127. JOHN: Never mind the pretty girl...look at those potatoes. And that gorgeous bowl of potato salad in the next float.

128. FREYMAN: See...the sign says "potato salad takes the place of a sandwich.' That's a fine way to use less bread at lunch or suppertime... especially in hot weather.

129. JOHN: Mrs. Freyman, how long does this wonderful spectacle go on? I'll drool to death...but what a pleasant way to die.

130. FREYMAN: Well, it could go on all day, Johnny, 'cause there are so many other attractive ways you can make potatoes fill the gap left by bread. But we'll just pretend the potato parade turned a corner. Hear the music fading away into the distance...?

131. MUSIC: FADES APPROPRIATELY...OUT ALTOGETHER.

132. FREYMAN: And since you're such a potato enthusiast, I present you with this booklet, Johnny.

133. JOHN: Well thanks.... "Potatoes in Popular Ways"...by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Say...here's a recipe for potato pancakes...looks easy...bet I could make them myself. And potato puff...

134. FREYMAN: Heavens, Johnny, we don't thave time to read all those recipes over the air. But we'll be glad to send anybody a free potato booklet. I would like to mention that there's some wonderful ideas on how to give left-over potatoes a "lift"... also some tips that will help our listeners choose good potatoes and cook them to get the very most in food value. So front and center, Holly Wright.

135. WRIGHT: Friends, we'll be glad to send you a free copy of "Potatoes in Popular Ways" Just drop a card to CONSUMER TIME, Washington 25. D. C. This attractive booklet, prepared by the U. S. Department of Agriculture tells you why potatoes are good for you, and how you can serve them without worrying about extra calories. You'll also find good advice on how to store potatoes, as well as many interesting old and new potato recipe favorites. For your free copy of "Potatoes in Popular Ways" write to CONSUMER TIME, Washington 25, D. C. Be sure to include your name, address, and the name of the station to which you are listening.

136. JOHN: And now, Mrs. Freyman, what's CONSUMER TIME's story for next week.

137. FREYMAN: We're going to have a real canning get-together next week, Johnny, and talk about community canning centers.

138. JOHN: Good, I'm sure every victory gardener will want to hear how easy it is to put up his fruits and vegetables at a community canning center.

139. FREYMAN: And the people who buy fresh produce to can will be interested too.

140. JOHN: Will we have any free booklets to give away?

141. FREYMAN: Yes indeed, a wonderful one that will give practical advice on setting up a canning center...and tell communities how to make the one they have do the very best job possible.

142. JOHN: So be with us next week for another edition of....

143. SOUND: CASH REGISTER

144. ANNCR: CONSUMER TIME!

145. SOUND: CASH REGISTER...CLOSE DRAWER.

146. ANNCR: CONSUMER TIME, written by Eleanor Miller and directed by Frederick Schweikher, is presented by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, through the facilities of the National Broadcasting Company and its affiliated independent stations. It comes to you from Washington, D. C.

This is NBC, the National Broadcasting Company.